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For Immediate Release

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**U.S. and Oman to Cooperate on Detecting
Illicit Shipments of Nuclear Material**

Will Help Thwart Terrorist Attempts to Smuggle Material for Nuclear Weapons and "Dirty Bombs"

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United States and the Sultanate of Oman signed an agreement today to help thwart smuggling of nuclear and other radioactive material. This is the first international cooperative agreement involving both the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Container Security Initiative and the National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) Megaports Initiative.

The arrangement with Oman is aimed at detecting and deterring illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive materials by smugglers and terrorists. Similar partnerships exist with the Netherlands, Greece and other nations. Representatives from Europe, Asia, South America, the Middle East and the Caribbean are in active discussions with the United States to add these monitoring systems in key port facilities worldwide to further international nonproliferation efforts and provide useful evidence to support prosecution efforts.

NNSA Principal Deputy Administrator Jerry Paul praised Oman, saying, "The United States and Oman both recognize the need to remain vigilant against the threat posed by the trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive materials through the global maritime shipping network. This initiative is yet another example of the excellent cooperation in the overall relationship between the United States and Oman, and will further our mutual international nonproliferation and counterterrorism efforts."

The Megaports Initiative is part of NNSA's Second Line of Defense Program, and the equipment installed under it allows for detection of hidden shipments of nuclear and other radioactive material.

Under the Container Security Initiative (CSI), DHS stations multidisciplinary teams of U.S. officers from the Customs and Border Protection Bureau and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to work with their host government counterparts to establish security criteria for identifying high-risk containers. Their mission is to target and pre-screen containers destined to the United States. To expedite the inspection process, host customs administrations are required to provide non-intrusive technology to quickly inspect any identified high-risk containers before they are shipped to U.S. ports. The capabilities provided under the Megaports Initiative offer an additional targeting tool for customs officials supporting CSI.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear energy. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; works to reduce global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

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